

**FINAL**

**Minutes of the Meeting of Quonochontaug  
Central Beach Fire District Board of Governors  
held on Saturday, January 25, 2020 at the  
Quonochontaug Grange, 5662 Post Road in  
Charlestown, RI 02813**

**Members in Attendance:** Maud Bailey, Al Bartosic, DeDe Consoli, Tom Farrell, Julia Mathews, Fred (Fig) Newton, Roberta Peet, and Susan Wilson-Perez

**Members Absent:** Vinny Reppucci, Julie Low

Also in attendance were Peter Rettig, Manager of Beach and Dunes; Elaine Heilemann, Co-Manager of Special Events; Sally Devin, Assistant Clerk; and members of the public.

**1. Approval of Minutes/ Clerk's Motions**

A **motion** was made to approve the draft minutes of the October 12, 2019 meeting of the Board of Governors. A small edit was made. The motion made, seconded and **passed**, with all members of the Board of Governors in attendance voting in favor of the motion (other than the Moderator, who under the District's By-Laws only votes in the case of a tie).

**2. Treasurer's Report**

Roberta reported all taxes had been paid and reminded everyone we are tax exempt and everyone should have the tax exempt forms. The District does not have to reimburse for sales tax and so everyone should have and use the tax exempt forms. Sue thought a notice as to that should go out to all managers.

**3. Call to Order/Moderator's Report**

The Moderator, Susan Wilson-Perez, called the meeting to order at approximately 9:00 a.m.

**Fun Run-**Sue started the meeting with a discussion of last year's 4<sup>th</sup> of July Fun Run. Special Events funds the race. There was a lively discussion on how last year's Run and the Board enthusiastically supported the view of the new coordinators of the Event to re-establish the Run as a smaller community event as to alleviate some of the issues that occurred last year and bring the event back into line with how the community views it. The new coordinators are looking into an appropriate fee to help cover costs, maybe an amount that would cover the cost of a T-shirt as many other races do.

**Thomsen Matter-**Sue brought the Board up to date concerning recent events on the

Thompson Matter. The Thomsens have filed the Lien and are having their surveyor work with the Fire District's Surveyor on updating the West side of the Districts Survey to include the Thompson Property. Roberta Peet asked who covers the costs of the new work and Sue said as per the agreement the Thomsen's are responsible to cover the costs.

**RFP and Contracts-**It came to the Moderator's attention that a review of how the District handles Request For Proposals ("RFP") and awarding the subsequent contracts to ensure we were complying with all regulations would be prudent. Any contract over \$5,000 is subject to the regulations governing how to publish a RFP. The discussion centered around best practices and that most contracts subject to the regulations tend to be under the umbrella of Community Property or Public Works. It was further discussed that good communication and coordination is important among the Managers and those Committee Chairs so that work and contracts could be coordinated as much as possible in order to receive better pricing and be more efficient.

**Beach Access and Security-**Sue informed the Board about the recent settlement South Kingstown made to a Charlestown resident after he wandered onto the South Kingstown Beach gathering seaweed and was arrested for trespassing. Even though the charges were later dropped the man received a \$25,000 settlement from the South Kingstown. Following this story was a Board discussion on how our security measures should be changed or may be impacted by this development. The Board agreed that the parking lot is our primary point for control and that we need to be strong on information, but light on enforcement. Julia suggested that half of the parking lot gate stay shut so that the guards can control the ingress and egress easier and that every car should be check in and out of the lot. We all agreed that good training of our summer guards were important and that we would continue this discussion at the next Board meeting.

## **Managers' Reports**

a. **Merchandise Sales:** Manager DeDe Consoli reported to the Board that she has spent the fall and winter analyzing the last 2 seasons of sales to understand which sizes and silhouettes were successful. She is now starting the process of buying and is planning to go to a convention at the Javitts Center to learn more. Dee Dee is working with Vineyard Vines among other higher end retailers to develop merchandise options. Beach passes have been order and are two toned. The colors of the summer will be a French blue/gray and red.

b. **Beach and Dunes:** Peter Rettig, Manager, reported the beach is doing well and is in state of deferred maintenance. The Beach is large at the moment and is beautiful. He is investigating the different types of benches.

c. **The Police Liaison & Manager of Beach Gate Monitors:** Julie Low was absent and

the Beach Guard training was discussed during the Moderator's Report.

d. **Special Events:** One of the Co-Managers, Elaine Heilemann, reported that we have 10 events planned for the summer. The committee is planning the biggest event the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary dance scheduled for July 18<sup>th</sup>. The event will be being funded by ticket sales and a grant from Merchandise sales. There will be a live band and the committee is working on food options—it will be BYOB to keep costs in control.

e. **Boat Dock:** Bob Frazier was absent and so Sue Wilson Perez reported that Bob had ordered a metal gate for the Boat Dock parking lot as an improvement to the current situation of a chain across the entrance. Some conversation occurred as to whether the new gate will or will not be locked. Also mentioned is the continuing work of cleaning up the underbrush on the dock property.

### **Committee Chairs' Reports**

a. **Community Property:** Julia Mathews, Chair, reported Christmas trees will be picked up today. Garbage now once a week. Will let community know new garbage can dimensions when the contractor gets back with them, Working on RFP for community mowing.

b. **Finance and Budget:** Al started his report stating that the community had a surplus of approx. \$41,000 after all the reserve allocations had been made and that merchandise had an additional surplus of approx.\$18,000 also after all of the grants and reserve allocations had been made. So those surpluses now go into the unallocated general reserve, which has approx. \$1.2 million (this fund also includes community held property values along with cash etc., so the value is not all cash.) Because of the illiquid nature of some of the assets held in this fund its value is misleading. Al put forth the question for consideration as whether we should, as a governance issue, think about a procedure that when we have surplus of monies after the Annual Meeting allocation that surplus to a general contingency fund which will grow instead of our current procedure of putting surplus' into this general reserve fund. He suggested the Board should discuss this again in the future. So good news came in under budget and currently have about \$300,000. Short discussion about form that the Moderator has to sign for reporting requirements on pension funds that doesn't really apply to QCFB because of our size. Water issue number is \$70,000 and have some extra room because of the great Community property did on managing costs. We are in good shape will not need to collect more money. Sue asked if everything is added up-reserves on books how much does the community have. Al replied in reserves we have approx. \$78,000.00, in unallocated general reserve approx. \$1,200,000-- \$220,000 in cash (rest is property) so total so about \$340,000. Roberta did add that she has paying Dunn's Corners for Fire protection next week which is one of the community's largest expenses before the current water issues, Fire protection is our largest expense.

The second topic Al wanted to discuss was creating a method to assess future expenses in order to budget more effectively. If every chair and manager could think out 5 years or so and assess what situations, like maintenance or special projects, might impact the budget. Then we could budget more appropriately for them. We are currently doing this for roads, Vinny has a good understanding of what it costs to resurface the roads so we can bake into the budget a percentage needed for road resurfacing so when we need to implement it we have the funds. So if we could do this more universally it will be very helpful with managing our money. Someone suggested that Finance could develop a process and form to help the different committees and managers identified those future expenses. Started on a framework last fall and will developed it further. As a matter of governance, Sue pointed out that projects have to be approved by the Board and in some cases by the community. So I do think it need to be based on current scope of what the group does so, for example resurfacing the tennis courts is regular maintenance, but changing the surface to a new surface would be either a Board of Governor or a community decision depending on the cost. Unlike the standing committees, the Managers do not make independent decisions they execute decisions made by the Board. Al will circulate a form and get back feedback for a future discussion.

c. **Public Works:** In the absence of the Chair, Vinny Reppucci, Fig Newton reported on the current state of the water system and the boil water advisory. Testing has continued through the fall and while there has been no positive tests on either well #1 or well #2 for E. coli, well #1 has continued to test positive for TC while well #2 has tested negative for TC. Because well #2 is high in iron which creates additional problems it is currently being used as a backup water source with well #1 (low in iron) as our primary source. Fig went over the considerable work that has been done on the well fields, including the clearing of trees from the fields, the adding of specially tested clean fill, and the doming of the well heads. The consultant has stated that he feels it is best to let the land settle to see if the TC problem resolves itself.

Fig continued by reporting that consultants are working on RFP for a 4 log chlorinated system that might be required by the Board of Health and if such a system is viable for the community's structure and environment. There was discussion concerning the expenses paid and incurred by the use of the different consultants with Al Bartosic stating that it appears that money is still left from the amount set aside at the Annual Meeting to address this problem. Al would like to know of any additional costs that may arise in the future as soon as they become apparent. The community needs to have a clear picture of financial implications of the water situation. Fig agreed that an estimated budget of the possible costs of the project should be developed. Roberta will investigate for the Board the process of accessing the line of credit to as it could pertain to the water situation as discussed at the 2019 Annual Meeting. It was stated that it would be advantageous for the committee to create a document that communicates clearly the water situation and all the steps that have been taken and

that may be taken so that everyone is educated on this complex situation.

d. **Long Range Planning Committee:** Tom Farrell, Chair, reported the committee is working on Fire District document retention policy and the ever present utilities burying project.

**Adjournment.**

A **Motion** was made to adjourn the meeting at approximately 10:35 a.m. The motion was seconded and **passed** unanimously.

Respectfully  
submitted,

Maud A. Bailey, Clerk  
Quonochontaug Central Beach Fire District